DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 353 732 EC 301 763

AUTHOR Wikelund, Karen Reed
TITLE Social Aspects of Literacy Acquisition and Use.
PUB DATE May 89
NOTE 41p.; In: Literacy and the Hearing Impaired Conference Proceedings (Washington, DC, May 18-20, 1989); see EC 301 760.
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Information Analyses (070) -- Reports - Research/Technical (143)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Adolescents; Adults; Cross Cultural Studies; Cultural Influences; Disadvantaged Youth; Educational Principles; Ethnic Groups; Functional Literacy; *Hearing Impairments; Knowledge Level; *Literacy Education; Minority Groups; *Reading Instruction; Secondary Education; *Social Influences; *Teaching Methods; *Writing Instruction

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the research on the social dimensions of literacy acquisition and use, and applies conclusions to the provision of improved literacy training for adults and young people with hearing impairments. Discussion of the social context of literacy considers the ethnography of communication, literacy as cultural practice, and literacy as a collaborative social activity. A comparative study of literacy among adults in three ethnic American communities is reported, demonstrating that literacy is manifested as a set of culturally patterned practices. The need for three kinds of knowledge (technological knowledge, functional knowledge, and social meaning knowledge) for practical literacy is noted. Studies of the early childhood context of literacy acquisition and of the social contexts of adolescent literacy are also reviewed. Suggested applications include stressing the daily communicative functions of literacy; providing tutoring services for street youth in their own milieu; working with the whole person, especially with adolescents with low basic skills; spending a high proportion of time actually reading and writing and discussing what is read and written; building on background information and experience; and integrating speaking and listening with reading and writing. Implications for hearing-impaired adolescents are identified. (Contains 71 references.) (DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED353732

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF LITERACY ACQUISITION AND USE

By

Karen Reed Wikelund

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Working Paper Prepared for
A Conference: Literacy and the Hearing Impaired

What We Know and Need to Know About Learner Competencies of Hearing Impaired Adolescents and Young Adults

Hosted by

Center for Systems & Program Development, Inc.

May 18-20, 1989

Literacy, Language and Communication Program
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
101 S. W. Main, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97204
(503) 275-9590

EC 301763

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Social Aspects of Literacy Acquisition and Use

By
Karen Reed Wikelund
Literacy, Language and Communication Program
Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

Introduction

In the recent movie, Stand and Deliver, the high school math teacher (played by Edward Olmos) succeeds in recruiting a gang leader's sidekick and body guard into his calculus study group in part by providing him with multiple copies of the textbook. Why?

So that his peers won't see him carrying books around.

In the early 1980s in cities around the U.S., older, preliterate Laotian refugees gladly picked up their notebooks and pencils and headed off to school daily, month after month, even though they had little expectation of gaining (or even needing) sufficient English literacy skills to handle by themselves the literacy demands of life in this country. Why? Because their hosts and host country expected them to study English, and because it was a social event -- as one man laughingly told us, like going to market!

Young high school dropouts living on the streets of a major urban city on the West Coast study in a concerted effort to get their GEDs. But when the instructor feels certain they are ready to take the test, they disappear, never to be heard from again. Why? Passing the test means opening the doors to new opportunities and maybe a more stable livelihood. But it also means leaving the street and their "family" of peers.

What do these people have in common, besides low level basic skills in English? They all have an awareness of the social context in which they function and a perception of the social values placed on literacy in that context. And their understanding of those social dimensions affects their behavior regarding their acquisition and use of literacy skills.

Literacy used to be thought of in one-dimensional terms: Either you knew how to read or you didn't. Gradually this perception gave way to an understanding of the existence of degrees of literacy, though the definition of how much was enough for a minimum standard was never clear. (See Levine, 1982, for a critical analysis of the history of the concept of "functional" literacy since World War II.) We still grapple with this question today. One of the major variations of it is: How much (and what) will one need to know to be a productive worker in the workplace of the year 2000 (or 2010)? What basic skills will be necessary to equip workers to meet the demands of new technology and changing roles within the workplace?

At least we are learning to recognize the importance of the context within which literacy is used, and about the functions or purposes of its use. As we shall see, this is a major step forward toward understanding why and how people learn (or don't learn) and toward designing more effective educational programs.

In the following pages I shall review the relatively recent development of the body of research which has brought out the significance of looking carefully at the social dimensions of

literacy acquisition and use. I will then describe actual applications of this knowledge to the provision of improved literacy training for adults and young people.

One caveat is in order: I am not an expert on the hearing impaired, nor have I ever worked with deaf people. However, I am convinced that an understanding of the social context of the world of hearing impaired adolescents and their education is critical to any attempt to design effective programs to meet their literacy training needs and interests.

I hope to raise questions that you will be able to apply to your experience with these young people. Then together we can contribute informed recommendations for policy to create improved educational and training services for hearing impaired adolescents and young adults.

Significance of the Social Context of Literacy

The ethnography of communication. The focus on literacy as a social phenomenon rather than an individual characteristic has its roots in sociolinguistics.

As Szwed (1981) pointed out in 1977, this trend harks back to the work of Hymes (1962) on the ethnography of speaking. The concept of doing ethnographies of communication began to be applied to literacy in the 1970s, becoming a respectable research perspective in the 1980s with implications for educational practice.

Basso (1974) explored the ethnography of writing, building on Hymes' work, and in turn Szwed took this concept a step further to

apply it to the ethnographic study of literacy. Others interested in bilingualism and multilingualism have looked at literacy (and biliteracy) (see Ferguson 1979; Fishman 1980; Spolsky 1981, 1983), further developing a sociolinguistic approach to the study of literacy.

Szwed raised some critical questions about our knowledge of what literacy is, looking particularly at what he termed "the social meaning of literacy." By that he meant:

> the roles these abilities (reading and writing) play in social life; the varieties of reading and writing available for choice; the contexts for their performance; and the manner in which they are interpreted and tested, not by experts, but by ordinary people in ordinary activities.

He noted the complexity of studying literacy through this type of lens -- identifying five elements of literacy: text (what is read and written), social context, function (why and under what circumstances reading and writing is done), participants (readers/writers), and motivation. Szwed cautioned that these elements are, of course, interrelated and affect each other, which led him to speculate on a variety of configurations of literacy -- differences between members of different ethnic groups, age groups, sexes, socioeconomic classes -- and individual differences depending on stage and position in life.

Szwed called for the need to conduct an ethnographic study of literacy in a community to explore these issues systematically with the purpose of understanding the phenomenon of literacy more fully and of identifying the community's educational needs in order to address them more adequately.

Literacy as cultural practice. During the 1970s studies of literacy in societies around the world were challenging traditional, school-related definitions of what it meant to be literate. They were finding that access to schooling did not necessarily correspond to use of literacy. Also, societies differed in their understanding of the benefits and functions of literacy. Some groups had writing systems but used them rarely. Literacy was not always considered a set of skills that all members of society should acquire.

One such study was that of Scribner and Cole (1978; 1981) among the Vai of Liberia. The Vai are of particular interest for the study of literacy because their tribe practices three distinct forms of literacy: (1) English literacy, acquired in school and used in certain sectors of society to hold jobs and obtain information; (2) Vai literacy, using a script created by the Vai themselves, learned outside of school and used for personal affairs and letter writing; and (3) Arabic literacy, acquired through religious training and used for reading the Koran.

The Vai example provides a case in which distinct literacies exist which are acquired in different ways and used for different purposes by different groups of people. One cannot speak simply of whether or not a Vai person is literate. The situation is far more complex. The work of Scribner and Cole suggested that literacy is a culturally organized system of skills and values learned in specific settings. Literacy practices vary from site to site, as do the participants in the practices, the nature and

extent of the knowledge associated with the practice, and the language and script used. Thus it is essential to look at the literacy practice itself and the surrounding context rather than focus on individuals and their skills to understand when, how, why, and by whom literacy is used.

Literacy as a collaborative, social activity. Also during the 1970s, studies were examining literacy behaviors in communities in this country. Over nearly a 10-year period, Heath studied the communication of daily life in two working-class communities in the Southeast -- one predominantly black (which she called Trackton) and the other white (called Roadville). She and her colleagues studied the language use and recorded the literacy behaviors of individuals in various settings -- home, school, work and community. The result was a fascinating body of work (1980, 1982a, 1982b) culminating in the book Ways with Words (1983).

Relevant to the study of the social aspects of literacy, Heath found differences in the ways adults and children used literacy from one community to another. For example, in the black community adults viewed reading as a social activity, involving more than one reader. (In fact, Heath notes that solitary reading was viewed as an indication that the reader had not succeeded socially.) Readers in this community worked together to negotiate the meaning of written materials, discussing and joking about possible explanations. Reading was highly contextualized and purposeful. (Only relevant parts of instructions or brochures were read, for example, though the readers were capable of reading the entire material.)

Children from this community were not guided in their introduction to reading as are children in communities where parents are very school-oriented (though parents in this community highly valued school). Adults here did not read to their children or consciously model reading and writing behaviors. Rather, they let the children find their own reading and writing activities and adapted their instructions or assistance to fit the task chosen. Through this process the children achieved some mastery of the print around them without being formally taught and they were reading to learn, to acquire useful information, before they ever entered school to learn to read.

From this work, Heath drew the following conclusions about literacy skills and needs:

1. Reading and writing need not be taught exclusively in the schools. (In fact, formal methods of teaching and valuing literacy can limit potential for learning outside of school if community modes and competencies are devalued.)

2. Literacy acquisition does not require a tight linear order of instruction with isolated sequential hierarchies of skills.

3. Learners frequently possess and display skills out of school relevant to using literacy which are not exploited effectively for learning in school.

4. For a large percentage of the population, learning and sustaining reading and writing skills are not motivated primarily by a faith in their academic utility (Heath 1980).

What makes Heath's work particularly useful is the dual role she played, both carrying out an ethnography of communication which focused on child language and at the same time conducting teacher

training to improve the schooling available to children in the area. The implications of Heath's work for improved access to literacy skills via schooling for culturally different groups will be discussed further below.

Another researcher who has shed considerable light on the social nature of literacy is Fingeret (1982, 1983a, 1983b, 1984). She conducted interviews and participant-observation fieldwork with illiterate adults (both Black and White) in a northeastern urban setting. She too discovered that literacy in the context of daily life is not an individual, solitary activity. Fingeret found an elaborate social network based on the exchange of skills and knowledge among readers and nonreaders. Getting help to read mail or contracts (as in the case of a nonliterate businessman) or write letters or fill out forms is an accepted everyday occurrence. Specific individuals are identified for their skills with certain items and/or the degree of confidence or trust one has established with them, and helping networks evolve which take on considerable social significance in the lives of the participants, nonreader and reader alike.

As Fingeret points out so eloquently in her work, illiterates are often fully contributing, integral members of their respective communities with common sense, abstract reasoning and problem-solving skills that they use in accomplishing activities in collaboration with others. They participate in elaborate social networks in which they receive the help they need to handle written materials in exchange for other types of expertise they possess

(such as mechanical experience, counseling, or child care). Considering them to be powerless, unskilled, non-contributing members of society does them a crippling disservice and may complicate efforts designed to provide literacy training for them.

Sticht (1975; 1987; 1988) has done a considerable body of work identifying the basic skills training needs of the military and designing appropriate programs. He, too, recognizes the social nature of the uses of literacy, particularly in work settings. He and others (Mikulecky & Diehl 1980) have found great discrepancies in the difficulty levels of job reading materials and workers' reading levels, and yet through social interactions workers may use the materials productively to accomplish the work. Sticht is a strong proponent of the value of contextualizing literacy training to make it more effective.

A comparative study. My colleague Steve Reder and I have worked together in the study of literacy for the past 10 years. Steve had worked in Liberia with Scribner and Cole and was interested in pursuing further the concept of literacy as social practice. From 1978 through 1985 we conducted an ethnographic comparative study (funded by the National Institute of Education) on the development of literacy among adults in three ethnic American communities:

(1) an Eskimo fishing village in southcentral Alaska,

(2) a community of Hmong immigrants from the highlands of Laos now living on the West Coast of the U.S., and

(3) a partially migrant, partially settled Hispanic community in the migrant stream of the Pacific Northwest.

We were looking specifically at the effects of socio-cultural context on adult literacy development, trying to understand the many factors involved in whether or not adults acquire and use literacy (and different literacies) and what the implications of that understanding are for designing and implementing educational training for adults. (See Green & Reder 1986; Reder 1982, 1987; Reder & Green 1983, 1985).

Despite the many obvious differences among these three communities, they offer systematic features for comparison and contrast with regard to adult literacy development. All three share what we thought to be an important feature for adult literacy development: Each community has recently encountered rapidly increasing demands for literacy in everyday life. What makes the comparison of these communities useful is the fact that major differences exist among the socio-historical contexts in which these new environmental demands for literacy are being experienced.

Let me briefly sketch the history of literacy in each of these communities as a way of setting the stage for you to begin to picture what you need to consider when trying to identify the literacy needs and interests of a particular group or community. In Seal Bay, a pseudonym for the Eskimo village, contact with literacy has come as part of a broad, gradually increasing penetration of village life by the outside world (first by Russians in the early 19th century and later by the United States). Both the initial

contact with writing and much of the subsequent development of literacy in this community has occurred without displacement from its traditional environment or economy. In recent years, a series of political and economic events has radically altered the relationships between the village and external governmental agencies as well as accelerating the transition of villagers from subsistence fishermen to commercial fishermen. These changes have placed new demands for literacy skills on adults in Seal Bay.

In Newton, a pseudonym for the immigrant Hmong community, the introduction and development of literacy has occurred in a dramatically different socio-historical context. Rather than being surrounded and increasingly penetrated by the literate, English speaking world as happened in Seal Bay, Hmong settlers in Newton were transplanted from their traditional environment and economy in Southeast Asia into radically different settings, fraught with incremental demands for new language and literacy skills. (The Hmong were by and large a preliterate group prior to moving to the United States.)

In Pleasantville, a pseudonym for the Hispanic community studied in the project, literacy development has taken place in a third and, in many ways, intermediate, context between those of Seal Bay and Newton. The community in Pleasantville is partially migrant (like the Hmong of Newton) and partially settled (like the Eskimo of Seal Bay). Some adults in the community encountered and developed literacy in a previous environment in Mexico, whereas others are becoming literate in a new language (English) in the new

environment. Still others are of Hispanic descent but were born here and are literate in English, but not in Spanish. Economic roles in Pleasantville overlap partially with the traditional roles many community members held in Mexico.

Participant observation in each of these communities confirmed what Scribner and Cole (1981) found with the Vai in Liberia and Heath (1983) found in the two communities she studied in the southeastern United States: Literacy is manifested as a set of culturally patterned practices. Looking at literacy this way (rather than as an individual's skill level), we were able to ask a series of questions about the social organization of given literacy practices which led us to a better understanding of community members' literacy behaviors:

- What distinct social roles are evident among participants in a literacy practice?
- What are the social status and other characteristics of the individuals who fill those roles?
- What specialized knowledge (including but not limited to that pertaining to reading and writing) is associated with those roles?
- How are written materials used in the practice?
- What impact do various degrees of skill at working with those materials have on the performance of the practice?
- How is practice-specific knowledge socialized among participants?

Types of knowledge. We found, not surprisingly, that literacy is indeed a collaborative practice. Just as Heath and Fingeret have noted, people often work together on an activity requiring

reading and writing. We also found that there are different modes of engagement in a literacy practice, and thus different types of knowledge about it held by the participants. We have discussed this more fully elsewhere (see Reder 1987; Reder & Green 1985). Here let me mention these modes of engagement and types of knowledge and then focus on one in particular.

One kind of knowledge necessary to a literacy practice can be called technological knowledge of literacy -- that is, the requisite knowledge to be able to encode and decode written materials and to use the media required (paper, pencil, keyboard, for example). Another kind is functional knowledge -- understanding how writing is used for social purposes and the impact of its use or nonuse on task outcomes. And a third kind of knowledge is an understanding of the social meaning of a literacy practice.

Individuals may have varying degrees of these types of knowledge. Their engagement in literacy practices may depend on the type of knowledge they possess, and it may also help determine the type of knowledge they acquire (through continued engagement). For example, in Pleasantville a middle-aged migrant Hispanic man from Mexico who had taught himself the rudiments of Spanish literacy in his early 20s, and who could not speak or read and write in English, clearly understood the utility of a letter to the board of directors of a local social service agency. He asked me to help him formulate it, then he signed it and delivered it, registering his concerns about the services being provided to "his people." Without being technologically engaged in the literacy practice, he

had enough functional knowledge to initiate the practice and carry it through.

This man gradually took on an advocacy role in the community, participating in other such literacy practices and expanding and sharing his functional knowledge. Over the years, as this man composed, signed and received more letters, both in Spanish and in English, his technological skills improved also, at least within the context of the letter genre. Similarly, younger people with better technological skills who participated under his guidance gained functional knowledge of the use of letters to request or demand services.

Social meaning. You may recall Szwed's use of the term social meaning (described above). The term derives from sociolinguistics, where it is applied to the choice of use of a particular language in a given situation based on the social implications of participants' recognition of one set of their multiple statuses over another (see Reder 1987). For example, in conducting fieldwork in Pleasantville, as an Anglo fluent in Spanish I knew that I had to be careful in initiating use of Spanish with Chicanos who were also bilingual (English and Spanish), particularly after getting teased by some (who were more comfortable in English) that my Spanish was better than theirs. As an ethnographer trying to understand the social dynamics of language and literacy use in this bilingual community, it was more appropriate for me to allow others to choose the language we would use. (This also gradually told me something

about my acceptance in various circles within the community.)

We found the term social meaning especially useful in describing and understanding community members' choices of modes of engagement in literacy practices.

Let's take the example of the various social meanings of literacy in Seal Bay. The significance of multiple social meanings for literacy can be seen in the differing attitudes villagers have toward reading and writing in English and in Slavonic and how those attitudes have evolved. Literacy was first introduced through Russian Orthodox priests who established a missionary church. In that religious tradition, the reading of the Scripture, in Slavonic, is an essential part of the worship service. However, villagers still continued to speak the native Eskimo language. Native lay readers were trained in Slavonic and continued to read the sacred texts in a rote manner long after the missionaries had left and the villagers had lost the ability to actively comprehend the language. Literacy associated with Orthodox practice came to be regarded as "native" to the village and its readers were highly respected. The Orthodox church and its literacy practices -- largely restricted to reading for worship purposes -- are viewed today as a force for community solidarity and maintenance of the native culture.

When public education was introduced into this village by the U.S. government early in this century, however, literacy took on a second, different social meaning. Teachers encouraged full-time use of English, eventually leading to near extinction of the native

language. The schools, the American government, and the new, English-based Baptist church all stressed the importance of active use of English writing for a whole new range of literacy practices, including conducting village business. English, and especially English reading and writing, came to be associated with forces that were destructive to native tradition. The influence of these negative associations can still be seen today. Even though English literacy has gradually pervaded many aspects of community life and villagers do make use of it for the benefit of themselves and the village, they continue to prefer to conduct much of their business orally and are extremely reticent to display their English literacy skills, especially in front of non-native outsiders. Adult literacy programs have tended to attract few in this village for this reason.

On the other hand, the Hmong (as noted in the Introduction) have developed very positive social meanings associated with English literacy. And Hispanics in Pleasantville have differing meanings, depending in large part on their past experiences with schooling. For recent immigrants from Mexico, English literacy is viewed very positively. They are pleased with the education their children are receiving here and they have high hopes for the advantages that education will bring them. In addition, for those who have received legal status through the recent Amnesty legislation, studying English (and English literacy) has taken on new meaning because it is a requirement for continued legal residence here. For some Hispanics born in this country, however, English

literacy represents their unpleasant experiences with formal schooling. Consequently, the negative social meanings they attach to it affect their participation in activities requiring reading and writing.

Studies of the Early Childhood Context of Literacy Acquisition and Use

The literature is replete with in depth, observational studies of the social context of literacy acquisition by young children, particularly as readiness for literacy relates to uses of spoken language. While preschoolers are not our focus here, much can be understood about the state of an adolescent's literacy development by considering the early contexts for learning that he or she experienced. I mention only a few of these studies here. Perhaps one of the most useful collections on this early environment is the anthology Awakening to Literacy, edited by Goelman, Oberg and Smith (1984). It is the result of a symposium in 1982 which brought together anthropologists, linguists, psychologists, sociologists and educators to discuss preschool children and literacy. The many insightful studies reported there are too numerous to describe here, but this book is highly recommended reading for anyone interested in a rich and detailed view of the early stages of literacy acquisition among children.

In her final discussion of the meaning of the symposium, Oberg notes that it is clear that certain features of the cultural context within which a child becomes literate have some relation to the degree and quality of literacy attained. But she cautions

that the family context is probably the most reliable unit of literacy transmission, reminding us that a child's literacy or lack of it cannot necessarily be linked to cultural group, social class or ethnic background. She goes on to emphasize the importance of context and function in the acquisition of literacy by noting a fundamental difference between family and school contexts: In the family context most literacy learning occurs incidentally and in relation to purposeful acts. In contrast, most literacy learning in school lacks the purposefulness and contextualization characteristic of literacy learning in the family.

Others, such as Heath (cited above), Taylor (1983), Teale and Sulzby (1987), and Wells (1985), have pointed out the importance of the home context and the value of participating in relevant, meaningful uses of literacy as preparation for becoming a reader. Similar to our findings regarding the various modes of engagement in literacy by adults and the ways that involvement can influence the spontaneous acquisition of skills and knowledge, so too does participation in functional, everyday uses of literacy facilitate learning to read and write for small children.

Social Contexts of Adolescent Literacy

Interestingly enough, there have been fewer in depth, field-based studies of the social contexts in which adolescents use reading and writing and increase their skills and knowledge. To be sure, there is an enormous body of literature about the problems of youth at risk of dropping out and appropriate programs to meet their needs.

But ethnographic studies of adolescent literacy are relatively rare.

Our interest in adult literacy issues led us to consider the social organization of literacy among adolescent dropouts, particularly those living on their own on the streets of major metropolitan areas in this country. In 1985, Conklin and Hurtig (1986), also colleagues at Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, conducted a study of the causes and scope of school dropout and, in particularly, the contexts for literacy use and need for further training of street youth in a major metropolitan center on West Coast. The study, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, found that understanding the social nature of literacy practices was particularly germane to describing street youths' lives and their perceived basic skills needs and interests.

The use of literacy by street youth is very often a social activity. Much as Heath described adults in Trackton interacting as a group when dealing with written materials, street youth joke and tease and interpret the meaning of magazine articles, want ads, crossword puzzles, assistance forms. They work on things together, some contributing bits of functional knowledge about the item and the consequences of its use, others with good technological literacy skills actually filling it out or reading it aloud.

Conklin and Hurtig found that reading and writing are important activities for street youth. When initially asked about literacy, most youth answered that they didn't need reading and writing for their lives. Upon further exploration, however, this

type of response turned out to refer to reading and writing that they associate with school. Based on youths' specific reflections on their daily lives and on participant observation, the study found widespread use of both reading and writing. Like most teenagers, street youth are avid consumers of and devour advertisements, magazines and newspapers, record jackets, posters, etc. They also write a great deal -- for personal correspondence and personal expression. When a local social service agency sponsored a writing contest for these youth, the response was overwhelming and the results were both moving and impressive.

Youth on the streets have a wide range of literacy skills and knowledge. Just as is true of other dropouts, not all of these young people have low level basic skills. Still, writing samples from 80 applicants for services, at two agencies serving street youth, showed that 44 percent had poor or marginal writing skills and would have difficulty filling out applications for services or employment.

Street youth don't easily admit that their reading and writing skills are insufficient for their present lives. Instead they tend to assert that they don't need any skills they don't already have. Here we see the role of social meanings of literacy come into play in a powerful way. As Conklin and Hurtig (1986:51) point out, literacy is not socially neutral for these youth, but rather very heavily value laden. The social significance of literacy that ties reading and writing skills to achievement, success and acceptability in the straight world makes it impossible for street youth to

overtly value educational training. "Literacy represents a struggle they are waging between the values of their marginal life-style and the values of the culture they have left; their attitudes about literacy directly reflect this internal conflict."

Nevertheless, most youth write often for their own purposes. As other studies of teenagers have shown (see Shuman 1983, 1986 below), writing notes to each other, writing personal diaries and writing poetry are common genres of expression. The following writing sample illustrates both the social consciousness of the writer and her understanding of the social acceptability of the use of writing (however imperfect in technology) to get this message to her peers. It was submitted by an 18-year-old dropout from seventh grade to a counselor at a youth-serving agency to be posted on the public bulletin board.

The Reality of Life

> I have experienced some very real things in life and I feel that know one person should have to go through lifes hard core punishments so who ever reads this I want you to know that your not alone. I myself and others have some way been involved in either family problems or life on the streets. I am 18 years old and I have been living this day by day life for 7 years I think I have some of the same feelings as anyone else that has lived a disturbed life I know everyone is different but we still need to stop are problems before its just to late. So If you feel like your problems are just moving out of hand search for help or at least find someone to share your mixed up feelings with I'm real sure It would be better than carrying around a bunch of problems that you really don't need. I'm for real about what I am saying and I myself am real It took a long time but I am. And so are you so please don't let it end before you give it a chance.

Most studies examine adolescent literacy in the context of its relationship with oral language. This dual focus reflects not only the high degree of orality in adolescents' lives, but also the inevitable interrelationship between spoken and written language in daily life in general. Labov (1972) spent years studying oral and literate language behavior among black youth in Harlem. In a striking example of how differing groups associate different social meanings with literacy, Labov and Robins (1969) describe how success on the streets correlates inversely with educational achievement. In their study of youth gangs they found that the more stature a boy had on the streets, the lower his reading achievement level. All central and leading members of youth gangs were reading well below grade level, yet they exhibited strong verbal ability and exercised decision-making skills that their followers relied upon for their very lives. Labov and Robins conclude that "...the major problem responsible for reading failure is cultural conflict. The school environment and school values are plainly not influencing the boys firmly grounded in street culture" (1969:56, cited in Conklin & Hurtig 1986:50-51).

Similar findings are reported by McDermott (1974) in his study of minority dropouts. He notes that school failure is considered an "achievement." Minority youth achieved status by being rejected by the school, which represented the White, "straight" world which routinely rejected them in other aspects of their lives. This is similar to the feelings experienced by the predominantly white street youth studied by Conklin and Hurtig, who, having been abused

and discarded by family, school and "straight" community, in turn reject that mainstream world and its values, even when (as in the case of getting a GED -- or the very fact of living on the streets!) such rejection may be detrimental to their well-being.

Shuman (1983, 1986) spent 2-1/2 years studying oral and written language use by urban adolescents in a multiethnic inner-city junior high school in the eastern United States. Her work is particularly relevant to our focus on the social aspects of literacy because of her analysis of the functions of oral and written texts in the daily life of these teenagers and the effect of oral language on literacy practices. As Shuman notes, an unfortunate consequence of the common polarization of writing and speaking studies is the tendency to equate writing with standardized texts and therefore exclude the very meaningful uses of literacy in daily life. Shuman takes a much broader view and provides a case study rich in language and literacy samples from these young people's lives.

Shuman looked at the context of literacy use on three different levels: (1) the cultural context, that is, the general social structure of a community and its bearing on the uses of and attitudes toward literacy; (2) the situational context, the relationship between participants engaged in communication in a situation involving oral or written language; and (3) the more specific level of communication strategies or conventions -- whether or not speaking and writing constitute different relationships between text and context.

In the community Shuman described, all the parents of the adolescents studied claimed they knew how to read and write, but did so only infrequently. Shuman found that the adolescents used their literacy skills more often and for more varied purposes than their parents. In fact, they were often the family reader, writer and translator. As Conklin and Hurtig found with street youth, Shuman notes the high degree of collaborative literacy practiced by these young people, whether as equal participants with their peers, or in more hierarchical relationships, as when reading or writing something for their parents. We also found this to be true among both Hispanic and Hmong immigrant adolescents.

In the many notes teenagers wrote to each other, their personal diaries, and even a petition to the principal, Shuman found that these youths wrote as they spoke. Literacy did not necessarily produce certain kinds of text. Their use of writing was based on the daily contexts of their reading experiences -- helping the family or interacting with their friends. Thus, their writing was never context-free, but always written with the assumption of the broader understanding of the potential readers and of the group process the reading of it would entail.

Meek and her colleagues (1983) bring a somewhat different perspective to the study of adolescent literacy. They are teachers who carefully documented their work over time with adolescent non-readers in a school in London. This work includes excerpts from their interactions with their students, samples of students' writing, dialogues with students about literacy in their lives.

This work reflects the teachers' frustration with dealing with another example of the power of the social meaning of literacy: the reader or writer's diminished view of his or her own skills.

In the adult world, many people with relatively low basic skills have been socialized to accept society's judgment of them. The reluctance of many adult learners to let anyone in their community know they are studying to improve illustrates the degree to which illiteracy has been viewed as pathological in this society. Similarly, many adults are ashamed and consequently do not attempt to gain better skills.

Adolescents are very well aware of such societal views. In addition, if they are still in school they are participating in a social situation daily which rewards and punishes them based on individual skill levels. Many adolescents with low skills come to view themselves negatively and that view is reinforced all too often by teachers whose expectations for student progress and performance correlate with the skill levels of their students. That is, they expect more of the better students and even use different teaching techniques.

Children know how their teachers view them. Meek and her colleagues (1983) have written eloquently of their adolescent students' struggles with learning to read and write and what they as teachers learned working with them. At one point they refer to the students as having been "in captivity" -- kept there by their previous teachers' socially sanctioned views of them and their low reading skills. Meek and her colleagues note how low readers are

often given worksheets with minimum reading and writing requirements in lieu of the more complete reading and writing tasks assigned to better students. The students know the difference, and "the circle of failure revolves again" (p. 219).

According to Meek and her colleagues, the real condition of concern with their students was not the lack of desire to learn, or even poor basic skills, but rather it was the students' absolute conviction that they could not be successful no matter what they did.

Applications

What has this brief exploration of multiple social contexts of literacy acquisition and use shown us? In particular, what have we learned that can be applied to working with adolescents with low basic skills to help them improve their literacy skills, knowledge and interest in using written materials?

We have seen that literacy is a set of socially structured practices. There are several components to knowledge of literacy, including technological knowledge, functional knowledge and knowledge of the social meanings of literacy acquisition and use. These types of knowledge may be acquired in different ways, by different sectors of a society, and individuals may acquire one type without another. Similarly, they may use one type and not another (what we have called different modes of engagement). Because of its social nature, literacy use is often a collaborative venture. Literacy does not have to be acquired in formal training;

spontaneous acquisition is commonplace, dependent on the relevance and purposefulness of the practice for individuals' daily lives. Literacy is not limited to formal, structured texts, but rather is often closely linked to spoken language. And individuals and communities attach multiple and complex social meanings to the acquisition and use of literacy.

These characteristics of literacy must be considered when designing programs to serve adolescents' needs for improved basic skills. Let's look at some applications of these concepts to practice.

As noted earlier, Heath's dual role as ethnographer and teacher trainer put her in a unique position to apply her findings. Referring to the black community of Trackton, Heath (1980) describes how one teacher avoided the typical reading program trap of slowing down instruction and breaking skills into isolated fragments out of context. Instead, this teacher built on what she knew was going on in her students' lives at home and brought her students' perceptions into the classroom to aid her instruction. Heath (1980:130) cites the teacher's philosophy:

> Reading and writing are things you do all the time -- at home, on the bus, riding your bike, at the barber shop. You can read, and you do everyday before you ever come to school. You can also play baseball. Reading and writing are like baseball or football. You play baseball and football at home, at the park, wherever you want to, but when you come to school or go to a summer program at the Neighborhood Center, you get help on techniques, the gloves to buy, the way to throw, and the way to slide. School does that for reading and writing. We all read and write a lot of the time, lots of places. School isn't much different except that here we work on techniques, and we practice a lot -- under a coach. I'm the coach.

Heath (1982a) describes how teacher training programs and teachers in daily practice need to be able to tap into the uses of language (and literacy) and the ways of "talking about things" of their culturally different constituents and build on those skills in the classroom. In this way she notes that schooling will no longer be a one-way path from school out to community, but will become a more effective two-way communication of knowledge which no longer excludes certain groups.

Heath (1981) applied this strategy to the teaching of writing with black and white junior and senior high school boys with third to fifth grade reading abilities. Writing instruction began with bulletin board messages and advertisements and expanded to include discussions of students' perceptions about reading and writing problems in their environment outside of school. Eventually, students were analyzing and rewriting social service memos, housing regulations, warranties and other legal documents to clarify their meaning. The relevance of the instruction for the lives of these youths had brought improved writing skills within their grasp.

After Conklin and Hurtig completed their study of the basic skills training needs and interests of street youth, we obtained funding to apply our ideas to the design of specialized training for them (see Wikelund 1989 and Wikelund and Conklin 1989). Funded by a local private foundation (The Fred Meyer Charitable Trust), the project designed training for volunteer tutors to work directly with street youth at the social service agencies where the youth had already made contacts and felt comfortable. Called Takin' It

to the Streets, a name given the project by the youth themselves, the design of the tutorial approach grew out of our understanding of the social context of literacy specific to street youth. Our approach was based on the following premises:

- Training should take place at the youth social service agencies where street youth feel comfortable.
- Volunteer tutors should be specially trained to work with street youth, receiving concentrated training on the culture of street life.
- Training must be learner-centered to meet the needs, interests, skill levels and pace of each individual youth. (Training should start with whatever the youth are interested in and proceed from there.)
- Training should be focused on functional, real-world tasks and materials that are relevant to these youths' lives.
- Training should identify and build on learner's strengths (drawing out the functional knowledge abut literacy practices that all youth have).
- Training should not be limited to one specific method or set of materials because every learner is different. A wide range of materials and methods may be useful.
- Evaluation of the training should focus on the process of interacting and the overall learning and reengagement in learning that the youths experience, rather than on the successful achievement of particular goals. (Success has many definitions.)

We have also applied our perspective of the significance of the social context of literacy to the design of volunteer recruitment and tutor training strategies for work with adults (see Green, Reder & Conklin 1985; and Reder & Green 1985). As noted earlier, most adults (and adolescents as well) with low level skills have developed social networks that provide them with the assistance they need to accomplish the literacy tasks in their daily lives.

Through our observations of the lives of these adults, we became aware of the important role that informal literacy helpers play. We feel that these literacy helping networks may be an appropriate point for intervention to help individuals who want to improve their basic skills, but who might otherwise never participate in a formal instructional program.

Classroom-based literacy training and adult education rarely build on the social nature of literacy practice in the real world. Instead, formal teaching programs separate illiterates from the social environments which afford them a sense of identity and worth and place them in classrooms where they are expected to solve problems as individuals. Even in home tutoring, the dynamics of being tutored by a stranger evoke formal instruction expectations and anxieties. We believe that literacy training providers can expand their services by recognizing the value of the elaborate social structure that forms the fabric of daily life for illiterate adults.

Luttrell and Fingeret (1985) have also taken the research of Fingeret into application. They have designed a resource guide for teaching adults who are learning to read by building on the collaborative nature of literacy. The guide helps tutors and teachers work with their students to adapt and create materials that reflect the specific issues, concerns and experiences of their learners. The guide is a concrete example of how reading selections can be created from adult students' own words. The guide encourages participatory learning, with group readings and discussions.

Finally, Davidson and Koppenhaver (1988) traveled around the country visiting programs effectively providing literacy training for early adolescents. Their report presents in case study format valuable examples of how best to work with young adolescents who have low level basic skills. In summing up what works, they note that fundamental to success with this population is dealing with the whole child. Good literacy programs must also be good adolescent programs; that is, they must integrate effective instruction in a format that has been tailor-made for the characteristics and needs of young adolescents. Such programs have high expectations -- the staff believe that the students can and will learn. The programs are also developmentally responsive. They address issues of poor self-esteem, anger, depression, self-destructive behavior because these problems often accompany reading failure in young teens. Among the various curriculum and instruction characteristics outlined in the report, many are directly in keeping with the approaches outlined above:

- spend a high proportion of time actually reading and writing and discussing what is read or written;
- teach skills in context;
- build on background information and experience;
- integrate speaking and listening with reading and writing;
- use involvement-based curricula (doing rather than drilling);
- provide a wide variety of materials; and
- value collaborative learning, using varied groupings.

Implications

My charge today has been to share with you some of the latest research on the social aspects of literacy acquisition and use. You know, far better than I, that hearing impaired adolescents bring with them special characteristics to be considered in the design of programs to meet their needs. As a focus for the work group of this session, I would like to take a few moments to raise some questions to start us thinking about an ethnography of literacy for hearing impaired adolescents. This will then help us determine the information we need to gather to be able to provide appropriate and effective literacy training for these young people.

Let me begin by acknowledging my awareness of the existence of my own hearing bias. As Lane (1988) has warned in his critique of the concept of a "psychology of the Deaf":

> Hearing experts, commonly ignorant of the language, institutions, culture, history, mores, and experiences of deaf people, could only be guided in the first instance by the stereotypes to which we have all been acculturated."

Several researchers (perhaps most notably Reagan, 1985, 1988) have noted the similarities between the deaf community and other cultural and linguistic minority groups. Considering some of the parallels that suggest themselves helps us to begin to examine carefully the specific needs of low-level literates in this population.

- How is membership in this group defined?
- Is there a language common to members of the group?

- How is knowledge of the language acquired and passed on?
- Are there specialized roles related to that knowledge?
- What functions does the language serve?
- Does the language have a written form?
- If not, are members of the community literate in another language?
- If community members are fluent in more than one language, what is the relationship between/among languages? and among users of the different languages?
- How is the ability to read and write acquired? and in what settings?
- What are the accepted methods of instruction and of learning both in and out of school?
- How is the ability to read and write distributed in the community? Does this distribution vary with characteristics such as age, sex, socioeconomic status, educational level?
- What functions does the written language serve?
- Do its uses vary by context of use? by participants (users)?
- What kinds of information are considered appropriate for transmission through written channels, and how, if at all, does this information differ from that which is passed through alternative channels such as speech (or sign)?
- Who sends written messages to whom, when, and for what reasons?
- Is the ability to read and write a prerequisite for achieving certain social statuses?

I look forward to joining you in exploring the answers to these and other questions as we attempt to define policy recommendations that will address the needs of hearing impaired adolescents for improved literacy training.

References

Andrews, J. F., & Mason, J. M. (July 1986). How do deaf children learn about prereading? American Annals of the Deaf, 131, pp. 210-217.

Basso, K. (1974). The ethnography of writing. In R. Bauman & J. Sherzer (Eds.), Explorations in the ethnography of speaking (pp. 425-432). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bornstein, H. (1978). Sign language in the education of the deaf. In I. M. Schlesinger & L. Namir (Eds.), Sign language of the deaf: Psychological, linguistic, and sociological perspectives (pp. 333-359). New York: Academic Press.

Braden, J. P. (1986). Reading habits and preferences of deaf students beginning post-secondary programs. American Annals of the Deaf, 131, 253-256.

Clark, R. M. (Winter 1988). Parents as providers of linguistic and social capital. Educational Horizons, 93-95.

Conklin, N.F., & Hurtig, J. (1986). Making the connection: A report for literacy volunteers working with out-of-school youth. Report to the U. S. Department of Education. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. (Available from NWREL/DRS, $14.60, 100 p., or ERIC, Document ED 270-576)

Cook-Gumperz, J. (Ed.) (1986). The social construction of literacy. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Davidson, J., & Koppenhaver, D. (1988). Adolescent literacy: What works and why. New York: Garland Publishing, Inc.

Erting, C. J. (Fall 1985). Cultural conflict in a school for deaf children. Anthropology & Education Quarterly, 16,(3), 225-243.

Fagan, W. T. (1988). Concepts of reading and writing among low-literate adults. Reading Research and Instruction, 27(4), 47-60.

Ferguson, C. (1979). Patterns of literacy in multilingual situations. In J. E. Alates (Ed.), Georgetown University Roundtable on Languages and Linguistics (pp. 582-590). Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Fingeret, A. (March 1982). Through the looking glass: Literacy as perceived by illiterate adults. Paper presented At AERA Annual Meeting, New York City.

Fingeret, A. (Spring 1983a). Social network: A new perspective on independence and illiterate adults. Adult Education Quarterly, 33(3), 133-146.

Fingeret, A. (April 1983b). Common sense and book learning: Culture clash? Lifelong Learning: The Adult Years.

Fingeret, A. (1984). Adult literacy education: Current and future directions. ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education Information Series No. 284. Columbus, OH: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, Ohio State University.

Fishman, J. (1980). Ethnocultural dimensions in the acquisition and retention of biliteracy. Proceedings of the Mina Shaughnessy Memorial Conference.

Fox, M. (July 1986). Literacy programs don't work. Youth Policy, p.21.

Goelman, H., Oberg, A., & Smith, F. (Eds.) (1984). Awakening to literacy. London: Heinemann Educational Books.

Green, K. R. & Reder, S. (1986). Factors in individual acquisition of English: A longitudinal study of Hmong adults. In G. L. Hendricks, B. T. Downing, and A. S. Deinard (Eds.), The Hmong in transition (pp. 299-329). Minneapolis and New York: Jointly published by the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs, University of Minnesota, and the Center for Immigration Studies, New York.

Green, K. R., Reder, S., & Conklin, N. F. (1985). Literacy outreach: The community link, a guide to working with literacy helpers. Report to the National Institute of Education. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory. (Available from ERIC, Document ED 263 352, 45 p.)

Guthrie, J. T., & Kirsch, I. S. (January 1984). The emergent perspective on literacy. Phi Delta Kappan, 65(5), 351-355.

Haigler, K. O. (1989). Building bridges of meaning: The role of contextual literacy. Unpublished manuscript.

Harman, D. (1985). Turning illiteracy around: An agenda for national action (working paper No.2). New York: The Business Council for Effective Literacy.

Heath, S. B. (Winter 1980). The functions and uses of literacy. Journal of Communication, 123-133.

Heath, S. B. (1982a). What no bedtime story means: Narrative skills at home and school. In B. B. Schieffelin & E. Ochs (Eds.), Language socialization across cultures (pp. 97-124). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Heath, S. B. (1982b). Questioning at home and at school: A comparative study. In G. Spindler (Ed.), Doing the ethnography of schooling: Educational anthropology in action (pp. 102-131). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Heath, S. B. (1983). Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Heath, S. B., & Thomas, C. (1984). In H. Goelman, A. Oberg, & F. Smith (Eds.), Awakening to literacy. Exeter, NH: Heinemann Educational Books.

Holzman, M. (Jan. 1986). The social context of literacy education. College English 48(1), 27-33.

Hymes, D. (1962). The ethnography of speaking. In T. Gladwin & W. Sturtevant (Eds.), Anthropology and human behavior (pp. 15-53). Washington, DC: The Anthropological Society of Washington.

Ianni, F. A. J. (May 1989). Providing a structure for adolescent development. Phi Delta Kappan, 70(9), 673-682.

Kazemek, F. E. (November 1988). Necessary changes: Professional involvement in adult literacy programs. Harvard Educational Review, 58(4), 464-486.

Kirsch, I. S., & Jungeblut, A. (1986). Literacy: Profiles of America's young adults. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, National Assessment of Educational Progress. (Report No. 16-PL-02).

Labov, W., & Robins, C. (1969). A note on the relation of reading failure to peer-group status in urban ghettos. The Florida Foreign Language (FL) Reporter, 7(1), 54-7, 167.

Labov. W. (1972). Language in the inner city. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.

Levine, K. (August 1982). Functional literacy: Fond illusions and false economies. Harvard Educational Review, 52,(3), 249-266.

Levine, K. (1986). The Social Context of Literacy. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Luttrell, W., & Fingeret, A. (1985). "Making Sense": A resource guide for a collaborative learning to read process. Produced by the Division of Adult and Continuing Education, North Carolina Department of Community Colleges. Raleigh, NC.

McDermott, R. P. (1974). Achieving school failure: An anthropological approach to illiteracy and social stratification. In G.D. Sindler (Ed.), Education and cultural process (pp. 82-118). New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Meek, M., Armstrong, S., Austerfield, V., Graham, J, & Plackett, E. (1983). Achieving literacy: Longitudinal studies of adolescents learning to read. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Olson, D. R., Torrance, N., & Hildyard, A. (1985). Literacy, language and learning: The nature and consequences of reading and writing. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Reagan, T. (August 1985). The deaf as a linguistic minority: Educational considerations. Harvard Educational Review, 55(3), 265-277.

Reagan, T. (Fall 1988). Multi-culturalism and the deaf: An educational manifesto. Journal of Research and Development in Education, 22(1), 1-6.

Reder, S. (1982). A Hmong Community's acquisition of English. In B. Downing and D. Olney (Eds.), The Hmong in the West (pp. 268-303). Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Reder, S. (1987). Comparative aspects of functional literacy development: Three ethnic American communities. In D. A. Wagner (Ed.), The future of literacy in a changing world (pp. 250-270). Oxford: Pergamon Press.

Reder, S., & Green, K. R. (1983). Contrasting patterns of literacy in an Alaska fishing village. International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 42, 9-39.

Reder, S. M., & Green, K. R. (1985). Giving literacy away: An alternative strategy for increasing adult literacy development. Commissioned monograph prepared for the National Adult Literacy Project. (Available from ERIC, Document ED 253 775, 38 p.)

Reder, S., Conklin, N. F., & Green, K. R. (1985). Expanding the culture of literacy Commissioned paper prepared for KCET, Public Television for Southern and Central California. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (Available from NWREL/DRS, $3.50, 12 p.)

Rosow, L. V. (November 1988). Adult illiterates offer unexpected cues into the reading process. Journal of Reading, 120-124.

Schickedanz, J. A. (1986). More than the ABCs: The early stages of reading and writing. Washington, D.C.: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Schlesinger, I. M., & Namir, L. (1978). Introduction. Sign language of the deaf: Psychological, linguistic, and sociological perspectives (pp. 1-8). New York: Academic Press.

Scollon, R. (1985). Language, literacy, and learning: an annotated bibliography. In D. R. Olson, N. Torrance, & A. Hildyard, (Eds.), Literacy, language, and learning: The nature and consequences of reading and writing. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Scribner, S., & Cole, M. (1981). The psychology of literacy. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Shuman, A. (1983). Collaborative literacy in an urban multiethnic neighborhood. International Journal of the Sociology of Language. 42, 69-81.

Shuman, A. (1986). Storytelling rights. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Spolsky, B. (1981). Bilingualism and biliteracy. The Canadian Modern Language Review, 37(3), 475-485.

Spolsky, B. (1983). Triglossia and literacy in Jewish Palestine of the first century. International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 42, 95-109.

Sticht, T. G. (1988). Adult literacy education. In E. Z. Rothkopf (Ed.), Review of Research in Education, 15, pp. 59-96.

Stokoe, W. C. (1978). Problems in sign language research. In I. M. Schlesinger & L. Namir (Eds.), Sign language of the deaf: Psychological, linguistic, and sociological perspectives (pp. 333-359) New York: Academic Press.

Strong, M. (Ed.). (1988a). Language learning and deafness. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Strong, M. (1988b). A bilingual approach to the education of young deaf children: ASL and English. In M. Strong (Ed.), Language learning and deafness (pp. 113-132). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Stubbs, M. (1980). Language and literacy: The sociolinguistics of reading and writing. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Szwed, J. F. (1981). The ethnography of literacy. In M. F. Whiteman (Ed.), Variations in writing: Functional and linguistic-cultural differences. Baltimore, MD: Erlbaum Associates.

Taylor, D. (1983). Family literacy: Young children learn to read and write. London: Heinemann Educational Books, Inc.

Teale, W.H., & Sulzby, E. (1987). Literacy acquisition in early childhood: the roles of access and mediation in storybook reading. In D. A. Wagner (Ed.), The future of literacy in a changing world, (pp. 111-130). New York: Pergamon Press.

Trueba, H. T. (1988). English literacy acquisition: From cultural trauma to learning disabilities in minority students. Linguistics and Education, 1,(2), 125-152.

Venezky, R. L., Kaestle, D. F., & Sum, A. M. (Jan. 1987). The subtle danger: Reflections on the literacy abilities of America's young adults. Princeton, NJ: Educational Testing Service, National Assessment of Educational Progress. (Report No. 16-CAEP-01)

Von Der Lieth, L. (1978). Social-psychological aspects of the use of sign language. In I. M. Schlesinger & L. Namir (Eds.), Sign language of the deaf: Psychological linguistic, and sociological perspectives (pp. 315-329). New York: Academic Press.

Wikelund, K. R. (1989) Takin' it to the streets. Basic skills training for street youth: A manual for social service case managers. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (Available from NWEL/DRS as part of publication listed below, and will available through ERIC).

Wikelund, K. R., & Conklin, N. R. (1989). Takin' it to the streets. Basic skills training for youth: A manual for volunteer tutors. Portland, OR: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (Available from NWREL/DRS $23.50, including publication listed above, and will be available through ERIC).

Woodward, J., Allen, T., & Schildroth, A. (1988). Linguistic and cultural role models for hearing-impaired children in elementary school programs. In M. Strong (Ed.), Language learning and deafness (pp. 184-191). New York: Cambridge University Press.